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NABONIDUS IN ARABIA

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A CLAY TABLET¹ in the Goucher College Babylonian Collection, dated in the 5th year of Nabonidus (555—538 B. C.), directed the writer's attention to a study of the relations existing between Babylonia and Arabia in the 6th century B. C. The tablet in question is a temple record stating that fifty shekels of silver were given to a man for a donkey and some flour for the purpose of making a journey to *mât Te-ma-a*, i. e., the land of *Temâ*². The document itself gives no clue as to where it was drawn up, but it belongs to a collection

¹ Text No. 294, *Archives from Erech, Time of Nebuchadrezzar and Nabonidus*, Vol. I of Goucher College Cuneiform Inscriptions.

² The transliteration and translation of the inscription are as follows: 50 šiqil kaspi a-na 1 imêri alakti (A-GUB-BA) û a-na qîmi (ZID-DA)-šu a-na md Nabû-mušêtiq-urra apil md Istar-na-din-aḥi ša a-na mât Te-ma-a šap-ra na-din araḥ Addaru ûmu 5 kam šattu 5 kam d Nabû-nâ'id šar Bâ-bili ki. "Fifty shekels of silver for one road donkey and his flour are given to Nabû-mushêtiq-urra, the son of Ishtar-nâdin-aḥi, who is sent to the land of *Temâ*. The 5th day of Adar, the 5th year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon". The term A-GUB-BA = *alaktu* = "road" (see Brûnnow 11494) evidently means that the donkey (*imêru*) was capable of making a long journey. It seems best to connect the pronominal suffix of the phrase *a-na qîmi (ZID-DA)-šu* with Nabû-mushêtiq-urra, as flour was generally supplied for the use of human beings. Cf. Strassmaier, *Nbn* 1065, 3. 6. 9. *Ibid.* 214, 7 and *Nbk* 282, 1. 2 show that it was possible to purchase a donkey and at least 5 kors of flour for 50 shekels of silver. According to *Nbn* 1065, 3. 1 *pi* of flour was dispensed as the food of 13 goldsmiths. If 1 *pi* of flour represents the rations of 13 men for one day, 5 kors of flour would last one man 325 days (1 kor = 5 *pi*). Thus 5 kors of flour would be a liberal allowance for a journey of about 500 miles from Erech to *Teimâ*, and return, even if more than 1 *pi* were used a day. It may be presumed that the main purpose of the donkey was to carry this large supply of food for the man on his long desert march. The primary meaning of *šapâru* indicates that the man was commissioned to deliver a message.

of nearly a thousand tablets coming mainly from Erech in southern Babylonia, and this practically determines its origin.

The inscriptions of Tiglathpileser IV (745—727 B. C.) give accurate information as to the geographical position of *Temâ*, for *âl Te-ma-a-a* is associated with [*âl*] *Ma-as'-a-a-a* and *âl Sa-ba'-a-a-a*³. The list of the sons of Ishmael in Genesis 25, 13—15 includes אִשְׁמָאֵל and אֶלְמָא, and it is altogether likely that the expression *âl Sa-ba'-a-a-a* is an Assyrian gentile equivalent of אֶלְמָא, Genesis 10, 7; 25, 3; and Job 1, 15. Thus the identification of *mât Te-ma-a* with Biblical אֶלְמָא seems firmly established, and that the reference is to a district in Arabia is equally certain⁴.

Teimâ, or *Teymâ* (تَيْمَاء), the well-known city of Arabia, has already been shown to be the same as Hebrew אֶלְמָא and Assyrian *âl Te-ma-a*, which represents the name of the city, while *âl Te-ma-a-a* is equivalent to Arabic *Teimâny*, which means "A man of *Teimâ*"⁵. The district in which *âl Te-ma-a*, i. e., the city of *Teimâ*, was located was called *mât Te-ma-a* by the Babylonians. *Teimâ* was recognized as an important city in antiquity⁶. It is called Θαῖμα on Ptolemy's map of Arabia Felix. However, we are indebted to modern explorers and

³ III Rawlinson, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, 10 No. 2, 38 ff. Cf. *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek*, Band II, p. 20, line 53, Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies?* p. 301f.; Schrader *KAT*², p. 149; Meyer, *Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme*, pp. 318f., 327, 346, 347, 462. For minor references to *Teimâ* consult Sprenger, *Die alte Geographie Arabiens*, §§ 28, 32, 148, 220, 332.

⁴ Job 6, 19 associates אֶלְמָא with אֶלְמָא. In Isaiah 21, 13, 14, "The burden concerning Arabia" includes a reference to אֶלְמָא אֶלְמָא = *mât Te-ma-a*. Jeremiah 25, 23, which mentions אֶלְמָא, is followed by "and all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the mingled people that dwell in the wilderness".

⁵ Cf. Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies?* p. 303. See *ibid.* pp. 295 ff. for a discussion of all cuneiform references to Arabia. Note Text No. 175, 3, *Archives from Erech, Time of Nebuchadrezzar and Nabonidus*, for *ṣubât A-ra-bu* = "an Arabian garment". As to Arabic *Teimâny*, cp. תִּימָנִי, p. 385, Lidzbarski, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, which has been related by some to "Temanite", Job 2, 11, etc. Note Gesenius, Buhl. 1921, p. 877. Others derive אֶלְמָא from אֶלְמָא.

⁶ Consult Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 84, for a reference to a legend concerning Samaw'al, who lived in a castle at *Teimâ* and dug a well of sweet water. The Arabs have a tradition that *Teimâ* was built by Solomon. See El-Bekri in *Mara'sid*, IV, 23.

writers such as Wallin, Doughty and Hogarth⁷ for detailed accounts concerning the city and its environs. Wallin's report of his visit to *Teimâ* in 1848 makes note of its favorable location, its mode of irrigation, and its excellent products⁸. Doughty, a generation later, reveals its attractive appearance⁹, its prosperous condition¹⁰, its good water supply¹¹, its flourish-

⁷ Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, 1921; Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia*, 1904.

⁸ *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, Vol. X, p. 242f., "Teimâ stands on a mass of crystalline limestone, very slightly raised above the surrounding level. Patches of sand, which have encroached upon the rock, are the only spots which can be cultivated. The inhabitants, however, have considerable date plantations, which yield a great variety of fruit, of which one kind is esteemed the best flavored in all Arabia. Grain is cultivated, especially oats of a remarkably good quality, but the produce is never sufficient for the wants of the inhabitants. The greater portions of the gardens are watered from a copious well in the middle of the village. The hydraulic contrivance by which water is raised for distribution through channels among the plantations is the same as is used through Mesopotamia as well as in Nejd, viz., a bucket (Arabic *dullû* = Assyrian *dalû*) of camel skin hung to the end of a long lever moving upon an upright pole fixed in the ground".

⁹ Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, 1921, Vol. I, p. 285, "Delightful now was the green sight of *Teymâ*, the haven of our desert; we approached the tall island of palms, enclosed by long clay orchard-walls, fortified with high towers. *Teymâ* is a shallow, loamy, and very fertile old flood-bottom in these high open plains, which lie out from the west of Nejd". "We entered between grey orchard-walls, overlaid with blossoming boughs of plum trees; of how much amorous contentment to our eyes!"

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 286, "Prosperous is this outlying settlement from Nejd, above any which I have seen in my Arabian travels"; p. 293f., "Their corn plots are ploughed, in the fall of the year, with the well-camels, and mucked from the camel-yards; a top-dressing is carried upon the land from loam pits dug in the field's sides. There is not so good tillage in the Syrian villages". Doughty enumerates the following products of *Teymâ*: wheat, barley, corn, millet, tobacco, plums, pomegranates, figs, citrons, lemons, grapes and dates.

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 286; "If anyone here discover an antique well, without the walls, it is his own; and he encloses so much of the waste soil about as may suffice to the watering; after a plowing his new acre is fit for sowing and planting of palms, and fifteen years later every stem will be worth a camel". "Their wells are only the wells of the ancients, which finding again, they have digged them out for themselves".

ing groves and gardens¹², its valuable salt deposits¹³, its height of 3400 ft. above sea level¹⁴, its freedom from plagues and fevers¹⁵, its manufacture of sleeping carpets¹⁶, its trade with Damascus and Bagdad¹⁷, its extensive ruins¹⁸, its ancient inscriptions¹⁹, and its old importance as the center of a large province²⁰. Hogarth emphasizes the fact that *Teimâ* was "on the old route from the Gulf of Akabah to the Persian Gulf" and "a dividing point of roads from Petra to Gerra (on the Persian Gulf) in the east and Sheba in the south"²¹. It is in the Great Nafud, which furnishes plenty of food for horses and cattle and is the home of Bedouin tribesmen a large part of the year²².

¹² *Ibid.* p. 293.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 296, "In the grounds below the last cultivated soil, are salt beds, the famous *memlahât Teymâ*. Thither resort the poorer Beduins, to dig it freely: and this is much, they say, 'sweeter' to their taste than the sea-salt from Wejh. *Teymâ* rock-salt is the daily sauce of the thousand nomad kettles in all these parts of Arabia". See *ibid.* p. 287, for a sketch of the oases, ruins, salt grounds, etc., of *Teimâ*.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 285.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 286f.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 302.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 295.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* p. 287, "Old *Teymâ* of the Jews, according to their tradition, had been (twice) destroyed by a flood. From these times there remain some great rude stone buildings; the work is dry-laid with balks and transoms of the same ironstone. Besides, there is a great circuit (I suppose almost three miles) of stone walling, which enclosed the ancient city"; p. 288, "But the great mosque, whither all the males resort for the Friday mid-day prayers, preaching and Koran reading, stands a little without the *sûks* to the eastward. It is perhaps the site of some ancient temple, for I found certain great rude pillars lying about it". Note also pp. 549 and 552.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 291 and 296.

²⁰ *Teimâ* consists of three oases, *ibid.* p. 533, and originally included seven townships. Old *Teimâ* was the borough of the district. See *ibid.* p. 551. "Like other Arab tribes the children of *Temâ* had probably a nucleus at the town of *Teimâ*, while their pasture grounds extended westward to the borders of Edom and eastward to the Euphrates, just as those of the Beni Shummar do at the present time". *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, Vol. X, p. 243.

²¹ Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia*, p. 280. P. 156, *ibid.*, notes the importance of the Shammar region in Arabian traffic with Babylonia.

²² *Ibid.* p. 257f.

An exceedingly interesting indication of the ancient culture and central position of *Teimâ* is a monument known as the "Têma Stone", which may be compared with the Moabite Stone because of its valuable Semitic inscription, dealing with the introduction of the worship of a foreign deity²³. The script is that of "the early part of the middle period of Aramaic writing". Cooke says, "Caravans (Job. 6, 19) on their way to Egypt or Assyria halted here (i. e., at *Teimâ*); and the influence of commerce with these two countries is evident in this stone: the name of the priest's father is Egyptian, the figures of the god and his minister are Assyrian"²⁴. Another suggestion of Mesopotamian influence upon *Teimâ* is seen in certain words in the inscription supposed by some to have been borrowed from the Babylonians²⁵. The name of one of the deities may also be compared with that of a Babylonian goddess²⁶. It is thought that the "Têma Stone" belongs to the 5th century B. C. and that the city enjoyed a high degree of civilization at that time, with its religious life largely colored by Babylonian influence. If this is so, we can readily understand that a similar condition prevailed in the 6th century B. C., and possibly earlier, for, as has been noted, Tiglath-pileser IV refers to the people of *Teimâ* in the 8th century B. C.

Half-way between Mecca and Damascus and equidistant from Babylonia and Egypt, it is undoubtedly true that *Teimâ* occupied a strategic position in the trade routes of early times. Hence it is easy to perceive the importance of the Goucher tablet which indicates that a man was commissioned

²³ Cf. Cooke, *North Semitic Inscriptions*, pp. 195—199; *Revue d'Assyriologie*, Vol. I, pp. 41—45. Note references under *Temâ* in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*.

²⁴ Cf. Cooke, *ibid.*, p. 197.

²⁵ Winckler suggests the following: צרקתא = *sattuku*, שיכתא = *šimtu*, and סותא = *asumitu*. See Winckler, *Altorientalische Forschungen*, I pp. 183f. and II pp. 76f. Professor Montgomery has called the writer's attention to the fact that the first two terms may be regarded as good Aramaic words, while סותא has been compared by Noeldeke to Arabic صَوَّة.

²⁶ Cf. Cooke, *ibid.* p. 198, where he discusses the deity שגללה. He says, "The name has been compared (Corp.) with that of a Babylonian goddess שגל, mentioned in the lexicon of Bar Bahul, and stated to be the Chaldaean equivalent of Aphrodite, Legarde, *Gesam. Abhandl.* 17. Another suggestion is that Singala (*Sin-gala*) is the moon-god, Neubauer, *St. Bibl.* i 224 n".

to make a journey from Babylonia to the land of *Teimā* in the 6th century B. C. That such a journey was not a hardship is shown by the line of oases within easy reach of one another stretching 500 miles from the Euphrates to the city of *Teimā*²⁷. The desert was not an impassable barrier, for Nebuchadrezzar, having pursued the Egyptians to the border of their land after the battle of Carchemish in 605 B. C., upon hearing the news of the death of his father Nabopolassar, hurried back across its sands to make sure of his throne in Babylonia²⁸.

The most interesting reference to *Teimā* in cuneiform literature remains to be considered. In the Chronicle of Cyrus concerning the reign of Nabonidus and the fall of Babylon it is recorded that Nabonidus was in *āl Te-ma-a* in the 7th, 9th, 10th and 11th years of his reign, while the son of the king (i. e., Belshazzar), the princes and the soldiers were in *māt Akkadu*²⁹. Pinches connects *āl Te-ma-a* with *Te-e ki ša ki-ir-ba Bābili ki* and *Tu-ma ki*³⁰. Aside from the difficulty of equating *āl Te-ma-a*, *Te-e ki* and *Tu-ma ki*, and thus proving that a section of the city of Babylon is meant, the statement in the Chronicle that Nabonidus was in *āl Te-ma-a* is almost immediately followed by the declaration that the king did not go to Babylon³¹. The conclusion is warranted that *āl Te-ma-a* was not in the city of Babylon. In fact, it is intimated that *āl Te-ma-a* was outside the country of Akkad, for the statement that Nabonidus was in *āl Te-ma-a* is opposed by the affirmation that Belshazzar, the princes and the soldiers were in *māt Akkadu*³². Thus it is apparent that *āl Te-ma-a* of the Chronicle

²⁷ Cf. the excellent maps at the close of Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia*. *Ibid.* opp. p. 282, gives a good photograph of the "Tēma Stone".

²⁸ Cf. Winckler, *The History of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 316. See Richter, *Berosi Chaldaeorum Historiae*, p. 66.

²⁹ Cf. *Transactions of The Society of Biblical Archaeology*, 1882, Vol. VII, pp. 139—176; *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek*, Band III, 2. Hälfte, pp. 130 f.; *Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, Vol. 2, pp. 214—225, 235—257.

³⁰ Cf. *ibid.* p. 171, with illustration on page 152, showing plan of the city of Babylon, mentioning the district *Tu-ma ki*.

³¹ *Ibid.* pp. 156, 157, 160, 161.

³² Cf. King, *History of Sumer and Akkad*, p. 12, for reference to the fact that the Assyrians used the term Akkad loosely for the whole of Babylonia. The Neo-Babylonians evidently used the term in the same way. Cf. Halévy, *Mélanges de critique et d'histoire*, p. 2, note 2.

of Cyrus must be sought without the bounds not only of the city of Babylon but of Babylonia itself.

The fact that important religious ceremonies were not performed in the 7th, 9th, 10th and 11th years of the reign of Nabonidus may be adduced as corroborating evidence³³. It is difficult to believe that the king failed to function at these exalted rites while within reach of his capital city. Furthermore, when the mother of Nabonidus died in the 9th year of his reign, one of the years when he was in *âl Te-ma-a*, he is not mentioned as taking part in the mourning which was observed in Akkad³⁴. The only inference that can be drawn is that he was too far away to participate. Another link in the chain of evidence is a Yale tablet, dated in the 10th year of Nabonidus, when he was in *âl Te-ma-a*, indicating that food for the king was taken to *mât Te-ma-a*³⁵. The Yale Babylonian Collection also contains two royal leases of land issued during the reign of Nabonidus. One, dated in the 1st year of his reign, was obtained from Nabonidus himself³⁶. The other, dated in the 11th year of his reign, when he was in *âl Te-ma-a*, was obtained from Belshazzar who is mentioned by name³⁷. Thus it may be claimed that there is sufficient documentary proof for the conclusion that Nabonidus spent at least portions of the 7th, 9th, 10th and 11th years of his reign outside of Babylonia proper at a city called *âl Te-ma-a*. That this *âl Te-ma-a* is the same Arabian city referred to by Tiglath-pileser IV can hardly be doubted. Its identification with Biblical נַחֲשֵׁת, Ptolemy's Θαῦμα and modern نَحْشَة seems within the bounds of reason, if not inevitable.

³³ Cf. references given in note 31.

³⁴ Cf. *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, Vol. VII, p. 158f.

³⁵ Text No. 134, *Records from Erech, Time of Nabonidus*, Vol. VI of *Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts*. The food was brought back and sold by a slave, who was required to restore it at once to the temple in Erech. Cf. Text No. 131, 13, *ibid.*, dated in 10th year, and Text No. 155, 6, *ibid.*, dated in the 12th year.

³⁶ Text No. 11, *ibid.*

³⁷ Text No. 150, *ibid.* In this text Belshazzar is presented in the rôle of an exacting lord as compared with the more gracious attitude ascribed to Nabonidus in Text No. 11.

Various reasons may be suggested for the visits of Nabonidus to *al Te-ma-a*, now known as *Teimâ*. In the first place, as a victim of the malarial climate of Babylonia he may have sought relief in the clear desert air and elevated atmosphere of *Teimâ*. Or, as an archaeological enthusiast and rebuilder of temples, he may have been attracted by the inscriptions and monumental structures at *Teimâ*. Goodspeed supposes that Nabonidus was forced into retirement in the 7th year of his reign and that Belsházzar then became the real ruler of the nation³⁸. This view cannot be substantiated. In the 12th regnal year oaths were still sworn by the laws or decrees of "Nabonidus, king of Babylon, and Belshazzar, the son of the king"³⁹. Crown prince Belshazzar, as the second ruler in the kingdom⁴⁰, had almost equal authority with his father, but he is not mentioned as king in a single instance on the numerous contract tablets covering all the years ascribed to Nabonidus⁴¹. Moreover, possession of full kingly authority

³⁸ Goodspeed, *A History of the Babylonians and Assyrians*, p. 372.

³⁹ Texts Nos. 225 and 232, *Records from Erech, Time of Nabonidus*, Vol. VI of *Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts*. Cf. Text No. 39 and discussion on page 55 of *Miscellaneous Inscriptions in the Yale Babylonian Collection*, Vol. I of the same series, for a document dated in the 7th year of Nabonidus, recording two dreams which were interpreted as favorable to both Nabonidus and Belshazzar. See *Expository Times*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 297—299, for a corroborating text published by Pinches. These texts confirm the view that Nabonidus maintained his kingly authority with the help of Belshazzar. There is nothing to indicate that the latter revolted against his father.

⁴⁰ It was because of Belshazzar's position next to his father that Daniel was made the third ruler in the kingdom after he interpreted the handwriting on the wall. See Daniel 5, 29. Josephus refers to "Baltasar, who by the Babylonians was called Naboandelus", and states that Baltasar reigned 17 years, which corresponds to the number of years ascribed to Nabonidus. This confusion of Belshazzar with Nabonidus is not surprising under the circumstances.

⁴¹ See Strassmaier, *Inschriften von Nabonidus*; Clay, *Legal and Commercial Transactions, dated in the Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian and Persian Periods*, BE Vol. VIII, Part I; Clay, *Babylonian Business Transactions of the First Millennium B. C.*, Part I of *Babylonian Records in the Library of J. P. Morgan*; Keiser, *Letters and Contracts from Erech*, Part I of *Babylonian Inscriptions in the Collection of J. B. Nies*; Dougherty,

by Belshazzar would have made unnecessary the non-performance of metropolitan rites and ceremonies during the absence of Nabonidus. Hence the theory that Nabonidus sought asylum at *Teimâ* as a deposed monarch is far from the truth.

Likewise, it is difficult to regard either ill health or archaeological zeal as a sufficient explanation for the extended stay of a Babylonian king in Arabia, 500 miles from the seat of his empire, over which he still maintained control, and within 150 miles of the Red Sea. If it must be admitted that Nabonidus spent much of his time at *Teimâ*, it is natural to suppose that the northern and central sections of Arabia were under his rule. As the inscriptions of Nabonidus deal mainly with his building operations very little is said in them concerning the bounds of his empire. The statement usually quoted belongs to his descriptions of the restoration of the temples in Harran and Sippar, in which he simply says that he caused his numerous troops to come from Gaza at the border of Egypt, from the upper sea (i. e., the Mediterranean), on the other side of the Euphrates, as far as the lower sea (i. e., the Persian)⁴². Such a brief geographical reference cannot be regarded as determining the true extent of his domain. In the 8th century B. C. the inhabitants of *Teimâ* along with other Arabian peoples were tributary to Tiglath-pileser IV⁴³. It is unlikely that these Arabian districts became permanently independent during the rule of the powerful Assyrian monarchs that followed, viz., Shalmaneser, Sargon, Sennacherib,^{43*} Esarhaddon and Asshurbanipal. So when Nineveh fell in 606 B. C. and Egypt lost to Nebuchadrezzar at Carchemish in 605 B. C., we may suppose that the new régime in Babylonia inherited the neighboring and more distant oases

Records from Erech, Time of Nabonidus, Vol. VI of *Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts*; Nies and Keiser, *Historical, Religious and Economic Texts and Antiquities*, Part II of *Babylonian Inscriptions in the Collection of J. B. Nies*; and Dougherty, *Archives from Erech, Time of Nebuchadrezzar and Nabonidus*, Vol. I of *Goucher College Cuneiform Inscriptions*.

⁴² Cf. Langdon, *Die Neubabylonischen Königsinschriften*, pp. 220 f., Col. I, lines 38 f.

⁴³ See note 3.

^{43*} Herodotus, II. 141, calls Sennacherib "king of the Arabians and Assyrians".

of Arabia, if indeed it had not already absorbed them. The tradition preserved by Josephus that Nebuchadrezzar made Egypt a Babylonian province adds to the probability that the part of Arabia which was one of the highways of commerce and travel between the Mesopotamian and Nile valleys was similarly dominated⁴⁴.

Little light is thrown upon this problem by Greek, Latin and Arabic sources⁴⁵. Ptolemy 6, 7, 17, mentions a people living on the Persian Gulf called *Θαυοί* or *Θεμοί*. Note also the *بنو تميم*, referred to by Jakut, *Moscht.*, pp. 310, 352, 413. Fleischer, *Hist. Anteislam*, p. 198, thinks that the *Beni Teim* may refer to the original inhabitants of *Teimâ* wandering in different parts of Arabia. Forster, *Geography of Arabia*, I, pp. 289 f., holds similarly that the *Beni Temim*, who dwelt mainly on the shores of the Persian Gulf, sprang from the city of *Teimâ*⁴⁶.

These indications that people of *Teimâ* had their abode in the region of the Persian Gulf are interesting. It must be remembered, however, that Cyrus in his Chronicle states definitely that Nabonidus was in *âl Te-ma-a*, i. e., the city of *Teimâ*. If he had meant to convey the impression that Nabonidus was simply in a district that was settled by people from *Teimâ*, he would have used the more general term *mât Te-ma-a*. Furthermore, the *âl Te-ma-a* cited by Cyrus was well-known or else he would have been more precise in his reference to the place.

Knowledge of only one important city, thus named, has come down to us, and there is no doubt that *Teimâ* in Arabia enjoyed a renown and prestige in the ancient Semitic world far beyond our present conjecture⁴⁷. It is entirely within the range of historical possibility that *Teimâ* was the political center from which Nabonidus governed his Arabian province, while Belshazzar looked after affairs in Babylonia. Such a situation would corroborate and give added significance to the position occupied by Belshazzar as an energetic and masterful crown prince. The most interesting revelation, however, is

⁴⁴ Cf. King, *A History of Babylon*, p. 278.

⁴⁵ Cf. Weber, *Arabien vor dem Islam*, pp. 9f.

⁴⁶ Cf. note 20.

⁴⁷ See notes 18 and 20.

that Arabia seems to have been intimately connected with Babylonia in the 6th century B. C.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Cf. *JAOS* Vol. 41, p. 458 for a preliminary note on this subject. After the writer had come to his conclusions an interesting reference in Tiele, *Babylonisch-Assyrische Geschichte*, 1886, Part 1, pp. 470f., was found. Tiele arrived at the same view concerning the location of *âl Te-ma-a* without the bounds of Akkad, but specifically states that it cannot be the Arabian city mentioned by Tiglathpileser IV, although he suggests no proof for this latter inference beyond its apparent improbability. At the same time he recognizes the historical enigma presented by the absence of Nabonidus from Babylonia but finds no solution for it. Hagen in *Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, Vol. 2, 1894, pp. 236f. and note, also decides against the identification of *âl Te-ma-a* with *Teimâ* in Arabia. His theory is that *âl Te-ma-a* was the favorite residence of Nabonidus in Babylonia outside the capital city. He refers to the fact that it was customary for Babylonian kings to have such special living quarters from which they would depart for Babylon only at the time of the New Year's festival. However, it has already been shown that the direct intimation of the record is that *âl Te-ma-a* was not in Babylonia and that Nabonidus did not go to Babylon for the usual ceremonies at the beginning of the years he is mentioned as being at *âl Te-ma-a*. This can only be explained by the supposition that Nabonidus was at a considerable distance from the political center of his kingdom. Hagen also refers to the building operations which Nabonidus credits to himself at Sippar, Harran, etc., during the years when he spent at least part of his time at *âl Te-ma-a*. Hence he concludes that *âl Te-ma-a* must have been located in Babylonia, or the supervision of this work on the part of Nabonidus would have been impossible. It is true that the building inscriptions of Nabonidus, like those of his predecessors, are very detailed in their accounts of operations, but it is not necessary to suppose that everything was done under the royal eye. No doubt the work was supervised by special officers who made reports to the king when he could not be present. Nabonidus, even at *Teimâ* in Arabia, could have kept in touch with all the affairs of his domain in which he was interested, as an elaborate messenger service was maintained in ancient times. Cf. note 2. For instance, in the first month of the 7th year of his reign, when he was at *âl Te-ma-a*, he gave a command to Belshazzar to attend to a certain matter. Cf. Text No. 103, 1—3 of *Records from Erech, Time of Nabonidus*, Vol. VI of *Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts*. Texts Nos. 71 and 72, *ibid.*, indicate that Nabonidus may also have been absent from Babylonia in the 6th year of his reign, as a very important question concerning the use of temple paraphernalia in Erech was referred to Belshazzar in that year. The records were investigated for the purpose of determining the precedents set by Nebuchadrezzar, Neriglissar and Nabonidus. A decision made by Nabonidus in the

first year of his reign was quoted. It must be presumed that a weighty matter was not decided without referring it to the absent king, unless a previous action on his part gave the needed authority. That Nabonidus seems to have been interested in the western part of his empire during the early years of his reign is indicated by the references to Hamath, Mt. Ammananu and the Sea of the Westland in the opening fragmentary lines of the Chronicle of Cyrus concerning Nabonidus. Cf. note 29.